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EXAMINER

VARCOE JR, F

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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1764

DATE MAILED:

10/04/00

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks

Office Action Summary

Application No.
09/287,602

Applicant(s)
Kim

Examiner
Varcoe

Group Art Unit
1764



☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on Aug 16, 1999

☐ This action is **FINAL**.

☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, **prosecution as to the merits is closed** in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 35 C.D. 11; 453 O.G. 213.

A shortened statutory period for response to this action is set to expire 3 month(s), or thirty days, whichever is longer, from the mailing date of this communication. Failure to respond within the period for response will cause the application to become abandoned. (35 U.S.C. § 133). Extensions of time may be obtained under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a).

Disposition of Claim

☒ Claim(s) 1-21 is/are pending in the application.

Of the above, claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

☒ Claim(s) 1-21 is/are rejected.

☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

☐ Claims _____ are subject to restriction or election requirement.

Application Papers

☒ See the attached Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review, PTO-948.

☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are objected to by the Examiner.

☐ The proposed drawing correction, filed on _____ is ☐ approved ☐ disapproved.

☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

☐ Acknowledgement is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d).

☐ All ☐ Some* ☒ None of the CERTIFIED copies of the priority documents have been received.

☐ received in Application No. (Series Code/Serial Number) _____.

☐ received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

*Certified copies not received: _____

☐ Acknowledgement is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e).

Attachment(s)

☒ Notice of References Cited, PTO-892

☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s), PTO-1449, Paper No(s). 2

☐ Interview Summary, PTO-413

☒ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review, PTO-948

☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application, PTO-152

--- SEE OFFICE ACTION ON THE FOLLOWING PAGES ---

Art Unit: 1764

DETAILED ACTION

Drawings

1. The drawings are objected to under 37 CFR 1.83(a). The drawings must show every feature of the invention specified in the claims. Therefore, the Inconal valve of claim 11 and the clamp of claim 12 must be shown or the feature(s) canceled from the claim(s). No new matter should be entered.

Specification

2. The disclosure is objected to because of the following informalities: page 6 lines 9-10 are non-grammatical, line 14 contains incorrect spelling of powder, on page 9 line 18 "exchange units valves" is non-grammatical. On page 11, lines 8 and 9 recite "A drain 41" and "drain valve 41." Consistent use of drawing reference numbers is required.

Upon reading the application as a whole, one wonders if there has been a translation problem where, in at least some instances, the word translated "valve" would have better been translated "tube."

There are other errors of this type in the specification. The entire specification should be checked and any necessary changes made.

Appropriate correction is required.

Art Unit: 1764

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

3. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

4. Claims 3-5 and 7-21 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

With regard to claim 3, it is not clear what it is that is not burned. It is probably the gas. But which gas? Claim 1 recites “a gas from the combustion chamber” in line 5. Are gaseous combustion products from the combustion chamber to be considered “not burned?” Or does claim 3 refer to unburned gases that entered the combustion chamber with the possibility of becoming burned but that for some reason were not burned and instead exited the combustion chamber along with gaseous products of combustion?

With regard to claim 4, in line 2 it is not clear what is meant by “the gas.” The claim distinguishes gas that is not burned from gas that is burned. That distinction is not clear. Does one component of the combustion chamber effluent contain particles while another component does not? Is the angled bottom surface somehow able to distinguish those two types of particles and capture only one type?

Art Unit: 1764

With regard to claim 5, in line 4 “the directed gas” lacks clear antecedent basis in the claims.

With regard to claim 7, it is not clear whether the phrase “which is not burned” in line 5 refers to the water soluble element or the gas.

With regard to claim 9, in line 1 “said heating means” has no antecedent basis in the claims. In line 3, it is not clear what is meant by “arranged within rows.” A row is not usually considered to have an interior. In line 6, “both upper sides” lacks clear antecedent basis in the claims. Normally an upper side of a structure can be considered to be an inherent feature. But more than one upper side is not inherent.

With regard to claim 10, what kind of insulator is meant in line 2? It could be thermal or electrical. In line 3 “the short” lacks clear antecedent basis in the claims. Is “the short” intended to mean “electrical contact?”

With regard to claim 11, should “7” read “9?” It is not clear what is meant by “Inconal valve.” That element is not present in the drawings. It is not adequately explained in the specification. Presumably it is a valve fabricated from the metal alloy known as Inconel. But valves control fluid flow, and it is not clear what fluid is flowing here to be controlled.

Art Unit: 1764

With regard to claim 12, it is not clear what is meant in line 3 by “across.” Does this mean the nitrogen bathes the clamp, or that the nitrogen passes in some direction that is identified as relative to the clamp? The clamp is not shown in any of the drawings.

With regard to claim 13, is there a word missing in line 2 between “connected” and “the?” It is not clear how the arrangement of the heat exchange units in rows causes doubling of power to one row when power to another row is terminated. Should “whereby” be changed?

With regard to claim 16, it is not clear what is meant by “coupled” in line 4. Figure 3 shows them separated.

With regard to claim 18, it is not clear what is meant by a “pressure tube” or how a pressure tube differs from other tubes. It is not clear how the case and the valve constitute boundaries of a space in which the pressure tube resides. It is also not clear how maintaining a constant pressure in the apparatus results in maintaining the water at a fixed level.

With regard to claim 21, it is not clear what is meant by “attached with two plate materials.”

Art Unit: 1764

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

5. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

6. The factual inquiries set forth in *Graham v. John Deere Co.*, 383 U.S. 1, 148 USPQ 459 (1966), that are applied for establishing a background for determining obviousness under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) are summarized as follows:

1. Determining the scope and contents of the prior art.
2. Ascertaining the differences between the prior art and the claims at issue.
3. Resolving the level of ordinary skill in the pertinent art.
4. Considering objective evidence present in the application indicating obviousness or nonobviousness.

7. Claims 1-3, 5-8, 14, 15 and 18-21 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hartung et al., U.S. Patent No. 5,900,217.

With regard to claim 1, Hartung discloses a gas scrubber comprising a combustion chamber (Figure 1 (6)). Hartung discloses a wetting chamber (7).

Hartung discloses a guide plate (16) arranged between the combustion chamber and the wetting chamber for directing a gas from the combustion chamber into the wetting chamber.

Art Unit: 1764

Hartung discloses an injection nozzle (19) having an opening adapted to deliver a conditioned gas above the guide plate for minimizing the production and/or accumulation of a powder at an interface between the combustion chamber and the wetting chamber.

Hartung fails to disclose placing the wetting chamber below the combustion chamber.

At the time of the invention it would have been obvious to one skilled in the art to place the wetting chamber below the combustion chamber. Positioning the parts of the apparatus is no more than a design choice, well within the knowledge of one skilled in the art.

Them motivation would have been to prevent the solution containing the absorbed material from being heated by a combustion chamber below it.

With regard to claim 2, Hartung discloses a combustion chamber adapted to burn a flammable gas delivered to the combustion chamber (Abstract).

With regard to claim 3, Hartung discloses a wetting chamber adapted to receive water (Figure 1).

With regard to claim 5, Hartung discloses a plurality of water drenched absorbers (7) across which the gas is directed. Although only one such absorber is discloses in Figure 1, it would have been obvious to multiply these absorbers. Mere duplication of parts has no

Art Unit: 1764

patentable significance unless new and unexpected results are produced. In re Harza, 124 U.S.P.Q. 378 (C.C.P.A. 1960).

Hartung discloses an exhaust pipe (20) having an opening extending into the wetting chamber for receiving the directed gas after the gas is passed across at least a portion of the water drenched plurality of absorbers.

With regard to claim 7, Hartung discloses a gas scrubber comprising a combustion chamber (6) for eliminating explosive and flammable elements contained in a gas delivered into the combustion chamber from a gas intake.

Hartung discloses a wetting chamber (7) to receive the gas and dissolve a water soluble element of the gas which is not burned in the burning chamber.

Hartung discloses a means (19) for minimizing a powder produced due to a temperature difference between the combustion chamber and the wetting chamber at an interface between the burning chamber and the wetting chamber.

With regard to claim 8, Hartung discloses a gas scrubber wherein the combustion chamber comprises a case (2) connected to receive the gas intake (Figure 1) and an air intake (Figure 1) and a heating means (Figure 1, burner (12)) placed inside the case for applying heat to the gas flowing into the case from the gas intake.

Art Unit: 1764

With regard to claim 14, the use of cooling jackets to cool flowing fluids is well-known **in the art.**

With regard to claim 15, Hartung discloses a case with a partition (16) that forms a passage through the case from the combustion chamber. Hartung also discloses an absorber (7) at least partially drenched by water, a shower nozzle (18) and an exhaust pipe (20).

While Hartung discloses only one such absorber, it would have been obvious to one skilled in the art to multiply these absorbers, since mere duplication of parts has no patentable significance unless new and unexpected results are produced. In re Harza, 124 U.S.P.Q. 378 (C.C.P.A. 1960).

With regard to claim 18, it is not clear how this portion of the apparatus works. Nevertheless it would be obvious to maintain a particular water level by means of sensors and valves.

With regard to claim 19, Hartung discloses means (21) for viewing the interior of the apparatus. It would have been obvious to use a window for that purpose as well.

With regard to claim 20, it is well-known in the art to coat surfaces subject to chemical reaction with PTFE (Teflon) to prevent such reactions.

Art Unit: 1764

With regard to claim 21, Hartung discloses a guide plate (16) configured to guide the gas from the combustion chamber to the wetting chamber. Hartung also discloses an injection nozzle (919) to inject air or nitrogen above the guide plate for removing powder from the guide plate. It is not clear what is meant by “two plate materials.” The square funnel-shaped configuration is an obvious design choice and therefore within the knowledge and abilities of one skilled in the art.

8. Claims 4, 9-13, 16 and 17 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hartung et al., U.S. Patent No. 5,900,217 in view of Kim, Korean Patent Publication 97-9311 published June 10, 1997, English translation supplied..

With regard to claim 4, Hartung discloses a wetting chamber comprising an angled bottom surface (3) and a water expulsion nozzle (19).

Kim discloses a drain valve and a water nozzle having an opening directed to the angled bottom for flushing the particulates into a drain which opens into the wetting chamber.

Hartung and Kim are analogous art in that both deal with purifying a waste gas from a semiconductor manufacturing facility.

At the time of the invention it would have been obvious to one skilled in the art to combine the drain and nozzle configuration of Kim with the apparatus of Hartung.

Art Unit: 1764

The motivation would have been to prevent sludge buildup in the bottom of the wet chamber (Kim page 4 lines 1-3)

With regard to claim 9, Hartung discloses a heating means including a heat chamber (Figure 1).

Hartung fails to disclose multiple heat exchange units. It would have been obvious to one skilled in the art to add additional heat exchange units, since mere duplication of parts has no patentable significance unless new and unexpected results are produced. In re Harza, 124 U.S.P.Q. 378 (C.C.P.A. 1960).

Hartung fails expressly to disclose using electrical heating elements.

Kim discloses electrical heating elements (page 3 line 22; page 5 line 18).

Kim and Hartung are analogous in that both deal with purifying waste gases from semiconductor manufacturing.

At the time of the invention it would have been obvious to one skilled in the art to use multiple electrical heating units, as well as placing the heating element inside a ceramic. This use of ceramics is well-known in the art.

The motivation would have been greater temperature control.

Hartung discloses a pair of cleaning nozzles (19) installed on both upper sides of the heater chamber.

Art Unit: 1764

Thus it would have been obvious to combine the apparatus of Kim with the apparatus of Hartung to get the invention of the instant claim.

With regard to claim 10, it would have been obvious to modify the modified apparatus of Hartung by placing an insulator with an electric heater to prevent an electrical short circuit.

With regard to claim 11, Kim discloses Inconel for use as a heater housing (page 3 line 21).

At the time of the invention it would have been obvious to one skilled in the art to use Inconel for a heater housing in Hartung's apparatus.

The motivation would have been to take advantage of Inconel's heat resistance in order to withstand high temperature (Kim page 5 lines 14-16).

With regard to claim 12, it would have been obvious to one skilled in the art to protect electrical connections located in a corrosive atmosphere.

With regard to claim 13, the manner of connecting and operating the heating units would have been obvious to one skilled in the art. No unexpected effect has been shown to result from this obvious attempt to maintain a fixed amount of heating in the apparatus, regardless of the number of heaters employed.

Art Unit: 1764

With regard to claims 16 and 17, Hartung discloses a gas scrubber with a v-shaped bottom (3). Kim discloses a sensor that monitors the water level and initiates a water nozzle to inject water to push the sludge out.

At the time of the invention it would have been obvious to one skilled in the art to combine the sensor and nozzle of Kim with the v-shaped drain of Hartung

The motivation would have been to automatically remove sludge (Kim page 10 lines 2-6).

Conclusion

9. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Rick Varcoe, whose telephone number is (703) 306-5477. The examiner can normally be reached Monday through Friday from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm.


If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Marian Knode, can be reached on (703) 308-4311.

The FAX telephone number for this Group Art Unit is (703) 305-3599 (for Official papers after Final), (703) 305-5408 (for other Official papers) and (703) 305-6357 (for Unofficial papers).

When filing a FAX in Group 1700, please indicate in the Header (upper right) "Official" for papers that are to be entered into the file, and "Unofficial" for draft documents and other communications with the PTO that are not for entry into the file of the application. This will expedite processing your papers.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application should be directed to the Group receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-0661.

RV
October 1, 2000


Shrive Deek
Supervisory Patent Examiner
Technology Center 1764